Conference on Disarmament

26 May 2014
English
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Note verbale dated 21 May 2014 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament transmitting the statement delivered by Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations during the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia on 6 May 2014 in New York

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and has the honour to enclose the Statement at the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia by the Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations H.E. Mr. Vitaly Churkin dated May 6, 2014 with a request to distribute it as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

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Statement at the signing ceremony for the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in the signing ceremony for the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. This is a momentous event, which in its own way brings closure to years of efforts by our friends and neighbours in Central Asia for the realization of their initiative to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons. With the signing of the Protocol by the nuclear powers, a giant step forward has been taken towards the establishment of the zone in international law. All that is left is for this instrument to be ratified. We plan to do this as soon as possible.

The promotion and success of this initiative bear witness to the commitment of the countries of Central Asia to the non-proliferation regime and to their desire to make a substantive contribution to strengthening strategic stability and international security.

The Russian Federation has steadfastly supported the aspirations of the various regions of the world to establish zones free of nuclear weapons. We have already provided so-called legally binding negative security assurances to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (under the Treaty of Tlatelolco), Africa (the Treaty of Pelindaba) and the South Pacific (the Rarotonga Treaty). Now it is the turn of Central Asia, a region of States with which the Russian Federation has had close ties for many centuries.

Most of the nuclear powers, including the Russian Federation, present negative security assurances with accompanying interpretative statements or reservations. We will do so this time as well, submitting a note verbale to the depositary of the Treaty. I should like to emphasize that the note will contain the standard reservations made in accordance with our military doctrine. As we can see from the years of experience of other nuclear-weapon-free zones, this will have no detrimental effect on the security of the States parties.

It is noteworthy that the Protocol to the Treaty is being signed at today's ceremony by all the nuclear powers, all at the same time. This is the first time we have seen such a practice. It is no less noteworthy that the signing is taking place during the third session of the preparatory committee for the 2015 review conference for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This provides yet another symbol of the important contribution the Central Asian countries and the nuclear powers have made to the strengthening of the NPT regime.

New York, 6 May 2014